

# A Guide to Supervision

For

Licensed Master Social Workers

Mississippi Board of Examiners  
For Social Workers and Marriage & Family Therapists  
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## **Preface**

The purpose of this publication, *A Guide to Supervision for Licensed Master Social Workers*, is to provide an understanding of concept of supervision and to provide clarity as to the content, processes, and forms required for the licensure of certified social workers in the State of Mississippi. The information in this publication is intended as a guide to facilitate the procedures associated with this professional development opportunity available to Licensed Master Social Workers (LMSWs). The Mississippi Board of Examiners for Social Workers and Marriage & Family Therapists (MBOE) hopes that this publication will be used by licensed, registered, or perspective certified social work supervisors and their supervisees (licensed master social workers), as an aid in furthering the professional growth of competent practitioners in the field of social work in our state. All forms required for the supervision process can be found under Resources.

## Supervision

Supervision is both an administrative and educational process involving a partnership between a supervisor and a supervisee. The specific purpose of supervision, as set forth in the Rules and Regulations Regarding the Licensing of Social Workers and Marriage & Family Therapists is as follows:

*“Professional supervision for the LCSW candidate is intended to enhance professional development and competency, and equip the applicant for autonomous practice”.*

The aim of the relationship is to enhance and strengthen the supervisee’s professional knowledge, skills, and abilities. The supervisee’s daily execution and performance of his or her assigned duties, responsibilities and job tasks should be discussed with the selected Board approved supervisor in order to accomplish the aforementioned aim.

### LMSW Supervision Process

The following steps should be followed by an LMSW interested in completing the requirements for supervision to attain Licensed Certified Social Worker (LCSW) designation. All forms can be conveniently found under Resources.

1. A Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW) in good standing with the Mississippi Board of Examiners (MBOE) must submit an Application to Enter into Contract for Supervision Toward Licensed Certified Social Worker Status, along with specified processing fee of \$80.00. This fee should be made payable to the MBOE.
2. The LMSW must engage the services of an MBOE approved licensed, certified social worker to complete Step 1. Should an LMSW not be able to secure the services of such a provider, the applicant is encouraged to contact the MBOE to obtain a list of eligible supervisors.
3. Should an LMSW wish to be supervised by a non-Board approved LCSW, the LCSW will have to complete the supervisory approval process prior to engaging in supervision (refer to page 6 – Requirements for Supervisor).
4. Pending the securement of an LCSW supervisor with MBOE approval/registration, the applicant and supervisor should develop a Plan of Supervision for the supervisee. Please see Resources for forms. The Mandated Outline for the Plan of Supervision Form incorporates the acknowledgment by the supervisor to supervise the LMSW in accordance with the rules set forth by the MBOE. It is recommended that the supervisee refer to the LMSW Plan of Supervision Narrative Explication for guidance in completing the Plan (see pages 10-13). The completed Plan should then be submitted to the Social Work Discipline Specific Committee (SWDSC) of the MBOE for approval. *Only after receipt of correspondence acknowledging that approval has been granted by the Board, can the supervisory process commence.* The SWDSC reserves the right to request explanations or plans of correction at any point.

5. For supervisors and supervisees who are not employed within the same agency, there must be a written plan approved by the Board to address how the LCSW Supervisor will insure that the face to face supervision is observed or carried out. **Such face to face supervision must include on-site visits to the supervisees practice location at least once per six (6) month supervision period. Also, when a supervisee changes employment or employer during their supervision period, he or she must submit a revised plan of supervision to reflect that change under the “Agency Profile section” of the plan.**

Supervision may include alternate means of supervision by audio or audiovisual electronic device provided there is direct, interactive, live exchange between the supervisor and supervisee or provided that communication is verbally or visually interactive between the supervisor and the supervisee. No more than one-fourth (1/4) of the required hours may be by alternate means to direct face-to-face contact for a total of twenty-five (25) hours;

6. Evaluations are to be completed by the supervisor during consultative sessions with the LMSW supervisee. The supervisory process requires a minimum of one hour per week of face-to-face supervision for a minimum period of twenty-four (24) months. This equates to a total of one hundred (100) hours of required supervision. Fifty percent (50%) of the supervisory interactions must take place in the form of individual face-to-face interaction. The period of supervision may not exceed thirty-six (36) months. Within sixty (60) days prior to the end of the thirty-six (36) month supervision time period, the supervisor or supervisee must notify the Board in writing of any extenuating circumstances (i.e. Major Medical Issues, Loss of Employment, Family Crisis, etc.), anticipated by the supervisor and/or supervisee that would require an extension of the supervisory period. Any request for an extension of the supervision period must be accompanied by supporting evidence of the extenuating circumstances. An extension will be limited to six months beyond the thirty-six (36) month maximum. Retroactive requests for extensions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Supervisees may receive up to four (4) hours supervision credit for developing the supervisor plan collaboratively with their prospective supervisors. During the supervision period, you must complete a minimum of one thousand (1,000) hours of face to face client contact. This will be documented on the Verification of Face to Face Client Contact Form and submitted with your termination of supervision materials. The Evaluation form and Verification of Face to Face Client Contact Form can be found under Resources. Pending SWDSC receipt and approval conformation, evaluations are to be submitted on the following scheduled basis:
  - a. First evaluation is to be submitted in six (6) months.
  - b. Second evaluation is to be submitted in twelve (12) months.
  - c. Third evaluation is to be submitted in eighteen (18) months. The confirmation letter from the SWDSC approving receipt of this evaluation should include the following:
    - i. the final evaluation form
    - ii. the Termination of Supervision Form
    - iii. the required form for the *three* requested Professional References
    - iv. an application for LCSW designation

v. VERIFICATION OF FACE TO FACE CLIENT CONTACT FORM

- d. Fourth evaluation is to be submitted in twenty-four (24) months, accompanied by the Termination of Supervision Form, verification of face to face client contact form, the three required reference letters, and the application for LCSW licensure status.

Supervisors should be reminded that an explanation will be requested by the SWDSC if some supervisee scores all 10's, especially on the first evaluation. Supervisory comments are mandatory and are to be noted in the designated place for each evaluative tool submitted. The SWDSC reserves the right to request explanations or plans for correction at any point.

7. Upon arrival, the MBOE will send the LMSW applicant a letter to take the clinical exam. The supervisee and supervisor together are encouraged to review the Clinical Examination Content Outline in the ASWB Candidate Handbook before they apply to take the ASWB exam. Applicants for the LCSW exam can take this exam every ninety (90) days. After four (4) failed exam attempts, the candidate may appeal to the Board to be able to continue to take the exam and the Board may recommend remedial techniques to assist with continuing competency.
8. Upon receipt of the passing score and pending Board approval, the applicant will receive his or her LCSW license.

### **Requirements for Supervisors**

To assist the LMSW in the process of identifying a potential supervisor that will contribute to the overall learning and purview of the licensee, a selected supervisor must have the following qualifications and meet the indicated requirements:

1. A supervisor must have LCSW status and maintain that license in accordance with the laws of the State of Mississippi.
2. An eligible approved supervisor must have a minimum of two years of verifiable practice at the LCSW level.
3. Approved supervisors should maintain copies of supervisee's evaluations and documentation pertaining to the supervisor/supervisee relationship for a period of three calendar years.
4. A potential supervisor's credentials must be approved by the SWDSC and he or she is considered registered to be eligible to provide supervision. This process requires that an application and a one-time \$55.00 fee be made payable to MBOE.
5. It will be considered unethical for an LCSW without clinical expertise to engage in the supervision of an LMSW candidate seeking to become a clinician.

6. No plan of supervision will be approved if the contracted supervisor is supervising more than seven (7) licensed master social workers pursuing LCSW status. Individual supervision shall mean a maximum of two (2) supervisees meeting with one (1) supervisor. Group supervision shall mean a maximum of seven (7) supervisees meeting with one (1) supervisor
7. Supervision must occur within an agency, institution, or group practice setting. An LMSW practicing independently outside of an agency, institution, or group practice setting will be practicing outside Board regulations. The LMSW candidate will not be considered a candidate for LCSW supervision and will face disciplinary action.

### **How to Change Supervisors**

Since extenuating circumstances do arise and it may become necessary for a candidate to change supervisors, the following steps should be followed to ensure continuity:

1. The LMSW candidate should confer with the terminating supervisor to make sure that an Evaluation Form and a Termination of Supervision Form have been completed. The Termination of Supervision Form should specify the number of hours of supervision completed, the period of supervision, and the reason for the dissolution of the supervisor/supervisee relationship.
2. The aforementioned documents must be forwarded to the SWDSC for review within thirty (30) days of the termination.
3. The SWDSC will then review the submitted documents to determine whether the period of supervision and the number of hours supervised are verifiable to date.
4. When the applicant receives correspondence from the SWDSC acknowledging the termination of a supervisor, if supervision is to be continued with another supervisor, a new application, a supervisory contract with needed revisions must be submitted for SWDSC review.

### **Suggestions to Enhance the Supervisory Experience**

The National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) Code of Ethics should be referenced in guiding the conduct of both parties throughout the duration of this professional development relationship. The review of the following sections of the NASW Code of Ethics is critical in the establishment of the supervisory relationship:

- Section III: The Social Worker's Ethical Responsibility to Colleagues
- Section IV: The Social Worker's Ethical Responsibility to Employers and Employing Organization
- Section V: The Social Worker's Ethical Responsibility to the Social Work Profession

It is important to understand that the rules of confidentiality do apply to this relationship. The boundaries governing the content of the consultative sessions between the supervisor and supervisee should be firmly established at the beginning of the partnership. It is imperative that confidentiality is thoroughly discussed and understood by both parties involved; then, the ensuring premises should then be made part of the supervisory contract.

Supervisors and supervisees should be clear as to the roles and responsibilities of both parties with a mutual acceptance of these shared responsibilities. Specifics related to fulfilling these responsibilities (i.e., scheduling of conferences, prior preparation, use of conferences) should be agreed upon at the beginning of the supervisory relationship.

Both parties, with the supervisor carrying the major responsibility, should assess the supervisee's learning needs and patterns, capabilities, and any learning challenges. A recognition of the needs and reactions of both parties related to authority and dependency should be included in the process. The rationale for an educational assessment is to provide guidance to: 1) determine the goals of supervision; 2) for the supervisor to share knowledge and experience; and 3) to incorporate measures appropriate to the supervisee's needs and abilities. This assessment should be fluid and responsive to changes in the supervisee's job performance.

A climate of mutual respect and trust must be developed for both to share relevant thoughts, experiences and emotional reactions. The supervisory relationship should permit freedom to challenge, differ, experiment, and make and share mistakes. The supervisor should present a responsible and reliable professional model and simultaneously guard against any tendency to mold the supervisee into his or her image or to encourage compliant submission to suggestions.

The supervisor is also responsible for stimulating critical self-evaluative thought by the supervisee. Conceptual thinking should also encourage the transfer of learning from new or unexpected occurrences. Ultimately, substantiated evaluation of a supervisee's performance should be conducted on an ongoing basis.

## **Obligations**

As cited in the 1993-94 Report of the National Council on the Practice of Clinical Social Work to the National Association of Social Workers addressing the role of supervisors in clinical practice, the obligatory considerations of a professional development supervisor to a supervisee include the following:

### **Supervisors' Obligations**

- ❖ Provide documentation of supervisory qualifications to supervisee or auspice governing the supervisory context.
- ❖ Provide oversight and guidance in addressing concerns of the supervisee with regard to client.
- ❖ Evaluate the supervisee's role and conceptual understanding in the treatment process and his or her use of a theoretical base and social work principles.
- ❖ Conduct supervision as a process distinct from personal therapy or didactic instruction.
- ❖ Provide supervision in the agreed upon format (as documented in the submitted LMSW Plan for Supervision).

- ❖ Maintain documentation of supervision.
- ❖ Provide periodic evaluation of supervisee.
- ❖ Provide documentation for supervisee to meet the requirements of supervision.
- ❖ Identify practices posing a danger to the health and welfare of the supervisees' clients or to the public.
- ❖ Identify supervisee's inability to practice with skill and safety due to illness (i.e., excessive use of alcohol, drugs, narcotics, chemicals or any other substance, or as a result of any mental or physical condition).

### **Supervisees' Obligations**

- ❖ Participate in the supervisory process to the best of one's ability.
- ❖ Participate in the development of the learning plan to include formulating goals, learning needs, and citing professional strengths and challenges.
- ❖ Prepare for sessions.
- ❖ Seek critical professional feedback and evaluation from the supervisor.
- ❖ Seek knowledge regarding additional resources and collegial contacts.
- ❖ Maintain documentation throughout the course of the supervisory experience in possibly log format – indicating the date, length and type of the supervisory sessions (individual or group), synopsis of material discussed at each session.

### **Reminder**

In an effort to adhere to the precepts in the NASW Code of Ethics and to refrain from the appearance of impropriety and guard against possible conflicts of interests, it is recommended that a supervisor not supervise anyone with whom he or she has a romantic, domestic, or familiar relationship. This includes parents, spouses, former spouses, siblings, children, or anyone sharing the same household.

### **Disclaimer**

In conclusion, the Mississippi Board of Examiners for Social Workers and Marriage & Family Therapists does not recommend, endorse, prescribe, or promote the establishment of compensation agreements for supervision. As researched by NASW, there seems to be no standard fee schedule for supervision; however, if fees are charged, it is usually based on an hourly rate. Such contracts should indicate whether the charges applied are for each session or is for a flat rate payable to specific intervals (i.e., monthly, quarterly, annually).

## **Mandated Outline Content for the LMSW Plan of Supervision**

LMSWs should review the content of the attached narrative outline in order to fully address each item adequately. The respective Plan of Supervision developed by the supervisee in consultation with the supervisor, should guide the course of discussion, consultation, and study. In addition, upon the completion of supervision, the content of the document can be used by the LMSW in the pursuit of additional professional educational experiences (i.e., on resumes, job interviews, employment applications, for promotions, etc.).

The suggested outline for the LMSW Plan of Supervision should address, in detail, the following topics, as related to the potential supervisee’s area of practice and interests.

<u><i>Orientation</i></u>	<u><i>Professional Development</i></u>	<u><i>Practice Context</i></u>
Purpose of Supervision	Knowledge	Application of Theory
Goals for Supervision	Skills	Commitment to Learning and Service
Agency Profile:	Values	Priorities in Practice
History	Administration	Responsibilities to Clients to Agency and Community
Services	Policy	
Mission	Research	
Organization		
Fiscal Base		
Accountability		

### *Orientation*

- Purpose of Supervision**      Discuss the purpose of entering this plan of supervision and contract with your LCSW supervisor. There is the obvious purpose of obtaining your LCSW status, however, it is also important to speak to the learning aspects of the supervisory experience as well.
- Goals for Supervision**      Discuss how you will work together with your supervisor to successfully complete your two year period of supervision, how you will work together to show and evaluate learning progress, and how this period of supervision and study will prepare you to work at the more advanced level of LCSW.
- Agency Profile:**            In this section you will need to describe your agency and/or organization in detail. Please cover the following at a minimum.

<b>History</b>	Provide a brief historical description of your agency, including when it was started, how it was started, and how it has developed and progressed over the years.
<b>Services</b>	Describe specifically the services provided by your agency and the population it serves.
<b>Mission</b>	What is the mission of your agency, what is it attempting to accomplish in the delivery of its services in terms of outcomes with the population it serves.
<b>Organization</b>	Discuss the organizational structure of the agency, providing a description of the board, if applicable, or other oversight authority, key personnel involved in administration and service delivery, and any other information that might provide insight into the organization. Provide an organizational chart of your agency.
<b>Fiscal Base</b>	How is your agency funded? Describe the funding sources.
<b>Accountability</b>	To whom or what is your agency accountable in terms of effective service delivery and integrity in the use of funds.

**Professional Development**

<b>Knowledge</b>	What areas of knowledge do you hope to expand during supervision in order to become a more effective practitioner, i.e., individual and family functioning, diagnostic categories, dynamics of human behavior, various service delivery systems such as child welfare, health and mental health, knowledge of community systems, etc.
<b>Skills</b>	What skills do you plan to work on and improve during supervision? Be specific with your description, i.e., assessment and diagnosis, interviewing, verbal and written communication, teaching, etc.
<b>Values</b>	How will social work ethics be a part of your practice during supervision. How will you protect and preserve a client's right to privacy and confidentiality, right to be self-determining, etc. One suggestion is that you use the <i>NASW Code of Ethics</i> as a guide in developing this area. You should cover any possible liability issues that might arise, keeping in mind that both you as the supervisee and your LCSW supervisor have responsibility for the consequences of your work.
<b>Administration</b>	How will you interact with the administration of your agency during supervision? Will resource development, supervision, and program management responsibilities be a part of your plan?
<b>Policy</b>	Will your supervisory plan affect the policy of your agency? What would you like to learn about policy and policy development during

this time? Are policies, regulations, and laws a barrier to effective practice and will you address any of these areas and, if so, how?

**Fiscal**

What will you learn about the budgeting processes associated with your agency or the business side of private practice? Will you have the opportunity to learn about how budgets are developed each year, either in a government agency or individual private practice?

**Research**

What way will research be conducted and what will be the overall focus and purpose? Will clients be protected? Remember that record keeping, reporting, and data collection and aggregation are forms of research.

**Practice Content**

**Application of Theory**

What theories will you be applying during supervision. You should be specific about these and identify them by name, i.e., general systems theory, reality based theories, psychotherapy, etc., How will you apply these theories and in what settings, i.e., with individuals and families, groups, institutions, agency administration, etc.

**Priorities in Practice**

What will be your priorities for practice during supervision? On what area will you concentrate? Be specific in your description.

**Responsibilities to the Clients, to the Agency and the Community**

How will you balance and maintain your responsibilities to your clients, the agency and the community as you focus on the learning process? Can you assure that service will continue and that the best interests of these entities will continue to be served?

**Commitment to Learning and Service**

As you enter this plan of supervision, will you have a continuous commitment to learning and service. Will your purpose be to learn and grow as a professional in order to better serve your current client population as well as others you may serve in the future?